

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 034658

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ORIGIN AF-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

DRAFTED BY: AF/W:SFAPATRICK/MPH

APPROVED BY: AF/W:TWMSMITH

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R 121155Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 034658

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO ABIDJAN ACCRA ADDIS ABABA
CONAKRY COTONOU DAKAR DAR ES SALAAM KHARTOUM KINSHASA LOME LONDON
LOURENCO MARQUES LUSAKA MONROVIA NIAMEY OUAGADOUGOU PARIS PRETORIA
YAOUNDE LIBREVILLE KADUNA FROM LAGOS DTD 20 JAN 1976 RPTD YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ECON, ENRG, XA, OAU, AO, NI, US

SUBJ: OBASANJO AND GARBA ADDRESS ON FOREIGN POLICY:

OBASANJO WARNS ON OIL

SUMMARY: BOTH CHIEF OF STAFF OBASANJO AND MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA
USED SENIOR OFFICERS TRAINING COURSE AT IBADAN LAST WEEK AS
FOREIGN POLICY FORUM. WHILE GAHBA STUCK TO POSITIVE STATEMENTS
NIGERIANS AIMS IN AFRICA, OBASANJO LASHED OUT IN THINLY VEILED
ATTACK AT U.S. AND CLOSED WITH INT OF USING OIL AS POLITICAL
WEAPON, CONTRAST IN SPEECHES INDICATIVE OF POSSIBLE DIFFERENCES
WITHIN FMG INNER CIRCLE WITH COMMENTS OF OBASANJO PROBABLY MORE
REFLECTIVE OF VIEWS THAT HAVE COME TO THE FORE AS RESULT OF ANGOLA.
WHILE RASH MOVES TO NATIONALIZE OIL COMPANY OPERATIONS
UNLIKELY, FMG MAY WELL CONSIDER WAYS TO EXERCISE GREATER
CONTROL OVER WHERE NIGERIAN CRUDE IS SOLD.END SUMMARY.

1. IN PAPER READ ON HIS BEHALF TO SENIOR OFFICERS COURSE
JANUARY 14, GARBA TREATED FOREIGN POLICY IN PRIMARILY FUNDAMENTAL
AND PHILOSOPHICAL TERMS. HE REITERATED NIGERIAN POLICY STILL
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PAGE 02 STATE 034658

UNDER IN-DEPTY REVIEW. HE HAMMERED AWAY ON THE QTE

UNCOMPROMISING SUPREMACY OF NIGERIA'S NATIONAL INTEREST UNQTE WHICH SHOULD BE PURSUED WITH VIGOUR AND DEDICATION (BUT NOT RECKLESSNESS). NIGERIA SHOULD ASSUME A MORE ASSERTIVE AND DYNAMIC POSURE IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, GARBA REPORTEDLY DID NOT HARANGUE HIS AUDIENCE ON PERCEIVED INIQUITIES U.S. AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS. RATHER, HE CONTENTED HIMSELF WITH GENERAL RECITATION NIGERIA'S WELL KNOWN AND LONG-STANDING POSITIONS ON COLONIALISM, SELF-DETERMINATION AND THE NEED TO EFFECT DEMOCRATIC AND MULTI-RACIAL SOCIETIES IN SOUTH AFRICAN NAMIBIA AND ZIMBABWE.

2. OBASANJO'S SPEECH (WHICH HE DELIVERED PERSONALLY) TO OFFICERS WAS IN MARKED CONTRAST IN BOTH THRUST AND TONE. LIKE GARBA, HE BEGAN WITH REITERATION OF FUNDAMENTALS: THE ESSENTIALS OF AN EFFECTIVE FOREIGN POLICY ARE A CLEAR DELINEATION OF NATIONAL INTERESTS AND A DETERMINED EFFORT TO PURSUE SUCH INTERESTS. SUCH LABELS AS NON-ALIGNMENT, HOWEVER, HAD IN THE PAST BEEN USED AS EXCUSE FOR DOING NOTHING, NIGERIA CANNOT (AND WILL NOT) SIT ON FENCE ON IMPORTANT ISSUES TO DETERMINE ITS IMAGE AND INTEREST, PARTICULARLY ON MATTERS AFFECTING AFRICA.

3. OBASANJO THEN GOT DOWN TO BUSINESS, ANGOLA, HE SAID, IS ONE SUCH CRITICAL ISSUE INVOLVING NIGERIA'S NATIONAL INTEREST. UNQTE THE INTEREST OF NIGERIA HAS ALWAYS BEEN AND ALWAYS WILL BE THE LIBERATION OF AFRICA INCLUDING ANGOLA FROM POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DOMINATION. UNQTE. THERE COULD BE NO REVERSAL OF HIS STANCE ON ANGOLA. OBASANJO THEN MADE STATEMENT WHICH, WHILE NOT NAMING US, CARRIED THE FLAVOR OF HEAD OF STATE MUHAMMAD'S PUBLIC RESPONSE TO FORD LETTER. UNQTE IT IS VERY UNCHARITABLE OF THOSE (COUNTRIES) THROUGH BLACKMAIL AND VICIOUS PROPAGANDA, TO EQUATE OUR STAND ON ANGOLA TO COMMITMENT AND ALIGNMENT WITH ONE SIDE IN THE IDEOLOGICAL COLD WAR. AS THEY KNOW VERY WELL AND SHOW, IN PRACTICE THROUGH THEIR OWN SHIFTING ALLIANCE IN THEIR NATIONAL INTEREST, IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS THERE ARE NO PERMANENT FRIENDS BUT PERMANENT INTERESTS UNQTE.

4. OBASANJO THEN HINTED AT USING OIL AS POLITICAL WEAPON. NIGERIA, HE SAID, UNQTE MIGHT SOONER OR LATER BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT THE TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE OF OIL UNQTE. LARGE INTERNATIONAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 STATE 034658

OIL COMPANIES, WHICH ACCORDING TO OBASANJO ARE MOSTLY OWNED BY UNITED STATES, POSE A THREAT TO OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES.

SUCH COMPANIES ARE NOT UNQTE GUARANTORS OF THE INTEREST UNQTE OF OIL PRODUCING NATIONS AND BEST SOLUTION THIS SITUATION WOULD BE FOR UNQTE OIL PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS TO BE RECONCILED THROUGH GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL ACTION. UNQTE.

5. COMMENT: TWO SPEECHES SHOW NIGERIA REMAINS DETERMINED TO MAINTAIN PRESENT HARD LINE ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES. DIFFERENCES IN CONTENT AND TONE GARBA'S AND OBASANJO'S REMARKS INTRIGUING.

GARBA'S REMARKS REFLECT RELATIVELY SUBDUED, NON-BATTING LINE, WHILE OBASANJO'S WERE GOOD DEAL MORE EMOTIONALLY PROVOCATIVE WHILE OBASANJO'S REMARKS LIKELY REPRESENT HIS OWN GUT FEELINGS, THEY COULD FORECAST FURTHER ANTI-U.S. BLASTS, PARTICULARLY IF CONTINUED US INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLAN DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE PERCEIVED BY FMG AS CHALLENGE TO NIGERIA.

6. THIS IS FIRST TIME WE HAVE HEARD TOP ECHELON LEADER PUBLICLY ISSUE EVEN A VEILED THREAT TO USE OIL AS A POLITICAL WEAPON, CIMING AS IT DOES FROM NUMBER TWO MEMBER FMG HIERARCHY, SUCH THREAT MUST BE TREATED WITH SOME SERIOUSNESS. IF NIGERIA WANTS TO USE OIL AS POLITICAL WEAPON TO PROMOTE ITS FOREIGN POLICY, THIS WOULD NOT NECESSARILY INVOLVE FURTHER NATIONALIZATION BUT COULD MEAN FMG IS CONSIDERING WAYS IT MIGHT ASSERT GREATER CONTROL OVER WHICH CONSUMING COUNTRIES GET NIGERIAN OIL, DEPENDING ON POSITIONS THOSE COUNTRIES GOVERNMENTS TAKE ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES OF INTEREST TO NIGERIA.

7. WE UNDERSTAND SEVERAL OTHER POSSIBLY IMPORTANT PAPERS/ ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT SENIOR OFFICERS MEETING, REPORTEDLY INCLUDING UNITF SCHOLAR'S ADVOACCY OF NIGERIA'S USING OIL WEAPON. WE AND CONSUL IBADAN WILL ATTEMPT OBTAIN RELEVANT PAPERS AND WILL REPORT FURTHER IF WARRANTED. FASUM UNQTE INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLICIES, PETROLEUM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 FEB 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE034658
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: AF/W:SFAPATRICK/MPH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760053-1086
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760254/aaaabvfu.tel
Line Count: 142
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 13 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <13 APR 2004 by SmithRJ>; APPROVED <11 AUG 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: OBASANJO AND GARBA ADDRESS ON FOREIGN POLICY: OBASANJO WARNS ON OIL
TAGS: PFOR, ECON, ENRG, XA, AO, NI, US, OAU, (GARBA, JOSEPH N), (OBASANJO, OLUSEGUN)
To: OTTAWA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006